

Patent
Attorney Docket no: AUS920011031US1
(IBM/0039)

IN THE CLAIMS

The following is a replacement claim list.

1. (currently amended) A method for notifying an electronic address of the presence of physical mail in a designated mailbox, comprising:

detecting at least one piece of mail in the mailbox;
mapping the mailbox to the electronic address;
detecting a weight of the at least one piece of mail in the mailbox;
determining whether to send a notification to the address based on the weight information;
and
if so determined by the determining step, transmitting an electronic notification to the address indicating the presence of the at least one piece of mail in the mailbox.

2. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

detecting a weight of the at least one piece of mail in the mailbox
storing preferences associated with the mailbox, wherein the preferences comprise a specified weight to be detected before executing the step of transmitting an electronic notification; and
receiving an instruction that defines the specified weight as one of the stored preferences.

3. (currently amended) The method of claim [[2]] 1, further comprising:

determining whether to send a notification to the address based on the weight information
receiving an indication that at least one piece of mail has been placed in an alternate mailbox;
transmitting an electronic notification to the address indicating the presence of the at least one piece of mail placed in the alternate mailbox.

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4. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the detecting is performed manually.
5. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the detecting is performed electronically.
6. (cancelled)
7. (currently amended) An apparatus for notifying an electronic address of the presence of physical mail in the designated mailbox, comprising:
 - at least one mailbox, wherein the mailbox is adapted to receive at least one physical piece of mail;
 - a detecting means associated with the mailbox, wherein the detecting means is adapted to detect the ~~presence and absence~~ weight of the at least one physical piece mail in the mailbox;
 - a transmitting means associated with the detecting means, wherein the transmitting means is adapted to and transmit signals indicating the ~~presence or absence~~ weight of mail in the mailbox; and
 - a processing means for receiving the signals from the detecting means and for determining whether to send a notification to the address based on the weight information.
8. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 7, further comprising:
 - a means for transmitting an electronic notification indicating the presence of the at least one piece of mail in the mailbox
 - memory adapted for storing preferences associated with the mailbox, wherein the preferences comprise a specified weight to be detected before executing the step of transmitting an electronic notification; and
 - an input device to receive an instruction from an end user that defines the specified weight as one of the stored preferences.
9. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the detecting means is electronically

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activated.

10. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the detecting means is manually activated.

11. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 7, further comprising:

~~a means for weighing physical pieces of mail in the mailbox~~

a receiving means to receive an indication that at least one piece of mail has been placed in an alternate mailbox, wherein the transmitting means transmits an electronic notification to the address indicating the presence of the at least one piece of mail placed in the alternate mailbox.

12. (currently amended) A computer program product comprising a computer usable medium including computer usable program code for notifying an electronic address of the presence of physical mail in a designated mailbox, the computer program product comprising:

~~a recording medium;~~

~~means, recorded on the recording medium,~~ computer usable program code for detecting at least one piece of mail in the mailbox;

~~means, recorded on the recording medium,~~ computer usable program code for mapping the mailbox to the electronic address;

~~means, recorded on the recording medium,~~ computer usable program code for detecting a weight of the at least one piece of mail in the mailbox;

computer usable program code for determining whether to send a notification to the address based on the weight information; and

~~means, recorded on the recording medium,~~ computer usable program code for transmitting an electronic notification to the address indicating the presence of the at least one piece of mail in the mailbox.

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13. (currently amended) The computer program product of claim 12, further comprising:
~~means, recorded on the recording medium, for detecting a weight of the at least one piece of mail in the mailbox~~

computer usable program code for storing preferences associated with the mailbox, wherein the preferences comprise a specified weight to be detected before executing the step of transmitting an electronic notification; and

computer usable program code for receiving an instruction that defines the specified weight as one of the stored preferences.

14. (currently amended) The computer program product of claim 12, further comprising:
~~means, recorded on the recording medium, for determining whether to send a notification to the address based on the weight information~~
computer usable program code for receiving an indication that at least one piece of mail has been placed in an alternate mailbox;
computer usable program code for transmitting an electronic notification to the address indicating the presence of the at least one piece of mail placed in the alternate mailbox.

15. (cancelled)

16. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein the electronic notification further indicates that the at least one piece of mail placed in the alternate mailbox comprises a parcel.